

I want to talk about an issue that is near and dear to many folks in the Urbana Region, Centerville Elementary School, and two issues of concern related to the school - overcrowding and the students who must walk to school.

Let's first talk about the issues with the students/children who walk to school. This has been a problem that I have heard about since I became a County Commissioner, a little over a year ago. This school and those around it, within the Urbana community, were designed to be accessible by those who were within walking distance. Unfortunately, as we all know, the world has changed and sometimes the way we hoped or think things would work just don't turn out that way. Well, that is what has happened here. It is sad but the days of expecting students/children, especially on the elementary level, to walk more than a couple blocks is over. In my opinion, the world is just a different place and we have different expectations; plus there are some valid and serious traffic and safety concerns.

With the Board of Education (BOE) and Sheriff Chuck Jenkins working together, and with my support as the BOCC liaison to the BOE, I am sure you are aware that bus service is going to be provided. A big thank you should be given to the Sheriff for supporting this action and the credit should be given to the elected BOE for making the decision.

Now, to the overcrowding issue. Everyone is aware that Centerville Elementary is seriously over crowded to the tune of 140 plus percent. The redistricting plan, combined with the addition at Oakdale Elementary School being built, will help with the overcrowding issue. As you may or may not know, the Oakdale Elementary School addition has been pushed back in the past. The design is complete and the delay is due to a funding issue. The proposed CIP (FY 2012 – FY 2017) has the construction of Lincoln Elementary in FY 2012 and an addition to Oakdale Elementary in FY 2013. I sharpened my pencil and with the support of my fellow commissioners, took into account the additional State reimbursement of school construction money that was previously forward funded by the county, and added the recently identified (by the BOE) surpluses from seven (7) different completed school project accounts. By making some additional minor funding adjustments, with the support of my fellow commissioners, I have proposed to the elected BOE that it is possible to move the Oakdale Elementary addition up in the CIP to FY 2012.

I am pleased to report that the elected BOE, at their April 6 meeting, accepted and agreed with my recommendation. The Oakdale Elementary School addition will add 240 new seats and will reduce enrollment at Centerville by approximately 105 students. As you can see, the new Board of County Commissioners and the newly elected BOE have developed a good working relationship while working through the operational and CIP budgets together.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to inform you of what is going on in your county government. You can always e-mail me at [byoung@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:byoung@frederickcountymd.gov) or call me on my personal cell phone at 301 748 3218.

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Board of Commissioners of Frederick County, Maryland

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